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January 19, 2006

FEB 27 2006 000221

Mr. Lester Snow, Director  
Department of Water Resources  
South Delta Improvements Program  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

**RE: Support of the South Delta Improvements Program**

Dear Director Snow:

On behalf of Three Valleys Municipal Water District, I am writing today to express our organization's support for the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) South Delta Improvements Program (SDIP). We do believe that this is a critical project designed to meet California's diverse water needs. This October, DWR and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation released a draft Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/S) for SDIP, starting an important public review and comment process.

Three Valleys Municipal Water District strongly supports projects that improve water reliability, long-term planning and natural resource protection. As a water supplier for approximately 600,000 people in the eastern Los Angeles County, we fully understand the need for projects such as these that will help meet the state's ever-growing demand for this limited resource.

California faces a critical challenge – we need safe, reliable and high quality water to keep up with the rapidly rising population and fast-growing economy. However, we have limited water supplies in our arid state, so we must better utilize our existing water resources and infrastructure; otherwise, we put our communities, farms, environment and businesses at risk. Two-thirds of California receives its water from the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento San Joaquin Delta. Given its importance to the state, we need better ways to manage the Delta's water delivery system, as well as the water itself. In essence, we need to make every drop count, not just for now but for the future as well.

In 2000, the state and federal governments initiated the historic CalFed Bay-Delta Program to manage the Bay-Delta's water resources and eco-system. A unique collaboration of interests supported the plan including environmental organizations, water

FEB 27 2006 000221

agencies, business interests, farmers, and state and federal water and fish agencies. SDIP is the next step forward in this long-term planning effort for the Bay-Delta.

SDIP is a responsible and balanced plan to better utilize and integrate our existing water management infrastructure in the Delta. Collectively, it will improve our state's water reliability, quality and the overall health of the Bay-Delta ecosystem. As described, the program will construct seasonal tidal gates to protect fish, improve water circulation and quality in the Delta, dredge select Delta channels to improve water deliveries for local farmers, and allow State Water Project deliveries to increase modestly – only when needed and environmentally safe to do so.

Currently, the state is constrained in its ability to use surplus water supplies. We have the infrastructure to move the water, but until SDIP is approved, the state's water managers cannot fully use the existing system. SDIP calls for only a 3 to 5% increase in the average amount of water pumped from the Delta. More significantly, SDIP will provide the flexibility to shift the timing of water deliveries when surplus is available, and when environmentally safe to do so. SDIP will not require building a new project or the construction of major new infrastructure. Funding for the program has already been secured through passage of the voter approved bonds in 2000 (Proposition 13).

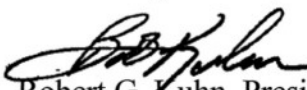
Importantly, SDIP will help protect important Delta environmental resources. Specifically, it will help protect fish species in the Delta channels. At the same time, by providing the state greater flexibility in how and when SDIP operates its system of pumps, fish are granted greater protections.

Given all these points, SDIP is supported by a statewide, broad coalition of water, agriculture, business, public policy and planning organizations including the Association of California Water Agencies, State Water Contractors, California Chamber of Commerce, California Business Properties Association and the Western Growers Association.

Water is the lifeblood of California – critical to our families, farms, and businesses. It is our responsibility to use this precious resource wisely through all possible best management practices to ensure California's healthy water future. Flexibility in our water delivery system will continue to accommodate growth in our population and economy while relying on the existing water supplies.

Again, we strongly support SDIP and encourage its further development progress. We hope that all key stakeholders will help to advance this critically-needed project.

Thank you,  
*Three Valleys Municipal Water District*

  
Robert G. Kuhn, President  
Board of Directors